

MOBILE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

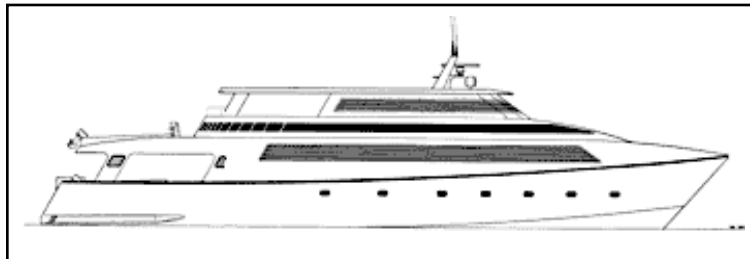
June 2004

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Mobile Bay Passenger Ferry Study Recommendations

The Draft of the Mobile Bay Passenger Ferry Service Summary Report is available for review and comment from May 18, 2004 to June 18, 2004 at the locations listed on page 2.

In addition, the Executive Summary is available at www.sarpc.org. Two public meetings will be held in Mobile on Tuesday, June 8, 2004. The chart at the bottom of the page includes the meeting information.



The consultants have recommended that initial service begin between Mobile Landing and the Fairhope Pier. Weekday service should be provided between 6:00 am and 10:00 pm. The headways during the morning and evening commute period should be thirty minutes to provide a competitive alternative to automobiles. During off-peak hours, an hour headway is recommended to serve casual users, visitors and other users. On weekends, the consultants recommended service between 7:00 am and 8:00 pm with one-hour to two-hour headways. Concurrent with the implementation of the Fairhope-Mobile Landing service, service between the Gulf Intracoastal

Waterway at the SR 59 Bridge in Gulf Shores and Mobile Landing should begin. This service will be advantageous to reverse commuters and seasonal tourists. Each of the three recommended destinations

will require a ferry terminal for embarking and disembarking passengers. The funding for the Mobile Landing ferry terminal has already

been secured, but the Fairhope and Gulf Shores Terminals will need to be financed. The total estimated capital costs for the Fairhope and Gulf Shores Terminals will be approximately \$832,000.

After analyzing five types of passenger ferryboats, the consultants recommended an aluminum hull catamaran with a 75-passenger capacity, a 40-knot operating speed, and a snack bar. The ferryboat would have to meet the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The recommended ferryboat will cost approximately \$2.2 million. Because three ferries are recommended for initial startup, the total ferryboat capital cost will be about \$6.6 million.

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Date	Meeting Location	Address	Time
Tuesday, June 8 th , 2004	<i>Downtown Mobile</i> Multi-Purpose Room, First Floor Mobile Government Plaza	205 Government St.	11:30 a.m.
	<i>West Mobile</i> Mobile Gas Company	2 nd Floor Auditorium 2828 Dauphin St.	5:30 p.m.

Mobile Transit Connection Recommendations

The Draft of the Mobile Transit Connection Study Report is available for review and comment from May 18, 2004 to June 18, 2004 at the locations listed in the chart below.

In addition, the Executive Summary is available at www.sarpc.org. Two public meetings will be held in Mobile on Tuesday, June 8, 2004. The chart on page 1 includes the meeting information.

The report summarizes the work undertaken by the consultant to research the feasibility of a transit connection between downtown Mobile and the Mobile Regional Airport. After evaluating five types of

premium transit, the consultants narrowed the options to two for further study, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU).

BRT is a broad term for a variety of rapid transit systems utilizing buses. The first format uses a dedicated busway on its own right-of-way. The second format uses dedicated lanes like High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes. The third format utilizes bus routes with limited stops operating in mixed traffic. In addition, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technology is incorporated into the operating system. For the purpose of this study, the latter two formats with some ITS technology were evaluated. The first BRT option evaluated would operate in mixed traffic the entire route, and the second option would operate in an exclusive lane from the Airport to Government Street and in mixed

traffic along Government and Water Street.

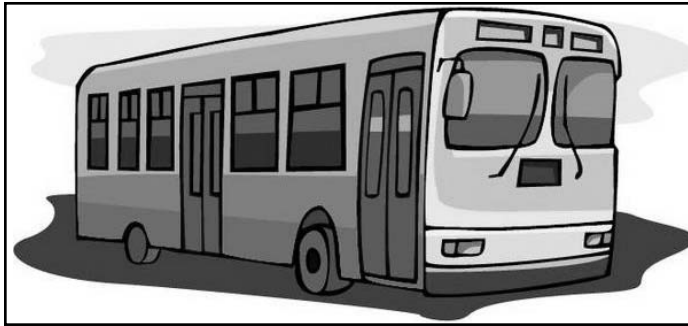
DMUs are diesel-powered railcars operating on standard railroad tracks, similar to light-rail systems but without the overhead electric wires. They usually operate at street level with at-grade pedestrian and street crossings. DMU railcars can operate on active freight lines if Federal Railroad Administration rules are met. For this study, two possible alignments for DMU were evaluated.

The two options for each technology were evaluated based on nine criteria: ridership, capital cost, annual operating cost, travel time, potential environmental issues, local

financial commitment, developmental potential, and potential economic impact. After the options were compared, the consultants recommended Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in mixed traffic. The preferred route runs down Airport Boulevard from the Airport to Government Street. Then the route follows Government Street to Water Street. The final stage of the route follows Water Street to the GM&O Transportation Center. The bus will stop at about a dozen locations between the Airport and the GM&O. Each station will have an elevated platform in each direction with a lighted canopy, benches, emergency phone, bike racks, and other amenities.

BRT is a unique transit option that combines technology, service, and quality to provide a competitive mode of travel. The recommended

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Mobile Bay Passenger Ferry Service Summary Report & Mobile Transit Connection Study Report Review Sites

- South Alabama Regional Planning Comm. Office
 - Alabama DOT, 9th Division Office
- Metro Transit System (@ the GM&O Building)
 - Mobile Community Action (Main Office)
- Mobile, Saraland & Tillman's Corner Chambers of Commerce
 - All Public Libraries in Metro Mobile
 - Daphne and Fairhope Public Libraries
- All City and Town Clerk Offices in Metro Mobile
 - All Public Housing Offices in Metro Mobile

Metro Transit System Neighborhood Service

On Monday, May 3, 2004, Metro Transit began the Tillman's Corner and Schillinger Road/Airport Neighborhood services. The reservation based system requires riders within the service area to call to make a reservation twenty-four hours prior to their intended trip. Hillcrest Road, Zeigler Boulevard, Flave Pierce Road, and Cottage Hill Road loosely define the Schillinger Road/Airport service area. Gold Mine Road, Theodore Dawes Road, Hamilton Bolevard, Old Rangeline Road, and Leroy Stevens Road loosely define the



Tillman's Corner service area. Because the service areas are not exactly along the listed roads, please call to find out if your location or destination is included.

Transit riders may obtain a ride to a destination point within the service area or they may connect with the larger fixed route service to travel outside the service area. The service cost \$1.25 each way, plus a 10 cent transfer fee for service to a fixed route. For more information or to make a reservation, please call 251-344-5656.

Ferry Study...Continued from Page 1

In addition to the capital costs, the consultants also researched the approximate annual operating costs for the passenger ferry service. The costs include crew and associated costs, ferry-boat maintenance and insurance costs, and management/marketing costs. A three-boat fleet would have an annual operating cost of about \$1.5 million, not including capital costs.

Using the travel surveys and travel demand model, the consultants determined that the ferry would generate about 150,000 one-way commuter trips a year. The revenues generated from these riders is based on the assumption that a multi-ride commuter ticket book would cost \$4.50 for each trip, a multi-ride non-commuter ticket book would cost \$5.00 for each trip, and the walk-on fare would be \$6.00 per trip. The estimated annual fare revenue, including charters, is \$990,000. The report also addresses various funding sources available for the Mobile Bay ferry service.

For more information on the Mobile Bay Passenger Ferry Service Summary Report, please contact:

April Guthrie
Transportation Planner
South Alabama Regional Planning Commission
Phone: 251-433-6541 X 413

Transit Connection...Continued from Page 2

BRT vehicles are 40-foot diesel powered, rubber-tired vehicles with a passenger capacity of approximately 35 to 44. As passenger awareness and use increases, larger capacity buses could be acquired to carry the additional passengers.

The recommended service hours for the Airport Boulevard corridor are weekdays from 6:00 am to 11:00 pm, Saturdays from 8:00 am to 11:00 pm, and Sundays from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. The initial headways would be 15 minutes during peak and off-peak hours, and the recommended fare is \$2. The consultants researched various Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies for the corridor including Automatic Vehicle Location/Bus Arrival Information, Electronic Fare Payment, and Traffic Signal Preemption. In the initial implementation, the consultant recommended electronic fare boxes, trip computers and processors, transit center software, and any necessary support, interface and hardware upgrades. More ITS technology could be implemented as ridership increases. The estimated initial capital costs, including vehicles and ITS technology, for the entire BRT system is approximately \$2.1 million.

For more information on the Mobile Transit Connection Study Report please contact April Guthrie, Transportation Planner SARPC, at 251-433-6541 X413.

**MOBILE AREA
TRANSPORTATION
STUDY
SOUTH ALABAMA REGIONAL
PLANNING COMMISSION**

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MPO Voting Membership

- * Mobile County Commissioner - Hon. Samuel Jones, Chairman
 - * Mayor, City of Bayou La Batre - Hon. Stan Wright
 - * Mayor, City of Mobile - Hon. Michael Dow
- * Councilman, City of Mobile - Hon. Reggie Copeland
- * Councilman, City of Mobile - Hon. Thomas Sullivan
 - * Mayor, City of Prichard - Hon. Charles Harden
 - * Mayor, City of Chickasaw - Hon. Jim Trout
 - * Mayor, City of Saraland - Hon. Ken Williams
 - * Mayor, City of Satsuma - Hon. William Bush
 - * Mayor, Town of Creola - Hon. Cleo Phillips
- * General Manager, Metro Transit - Mr. Bob Williams
- * Ninth Division Engineer, ALDOT - Mr. Ron Poiroux
 - * Member, SARPC - Mr. Norman Walton